

2011 Year End Review #1

In a few weeks, 2011 will be history. It went by like a bullet. I was talking to Aaron Dixon the other day about how busy we have been at “It’s About Time” this year. The reason why is that 1971 was a hell of a year - 40 years ago. As a person who lived through those times I remember them well. This also marks the 45th yr since the founding of the BPP.

We try through the website to tell the true story of the growth, development and the revolutionary principles of the BPP. We hold high our legacy so that those who want to know about the BPP can find out through the members of the BPP via the “It’s About Time” website.

The Black Panther Party archives we have been putting together have been growing at a rapid pace. We now have over 400 issues of the BPP newspapers on file. We have added 50 new photos, not seen before, to our files this year. Just this week we were able to secure a number of political buttons from the 1960’s and 70’s. We have over 700 issues of other underground newspapers and magazines covering the years 1965- 1975.

Every year we have department heads, students, historians, and people writing books travel to Sacramento to use our resources and network connections. Many times a month we have people emailing and calling on the phone asking to join the BPP. People viewing www.itsabouttimebpp.com see all the reports from Panthers and articles on Panthers from all over the country and world and believe that the BPP is still functioning. Having a phone number on the website brings that personal connection to people seeking more information than what’s offered on the website. In the last few years that phone number 916-455-0908 has connected many Panthers with each other. I have received calls from Panther Cubs and family members seeking more information on family members who were in the Party. I got a call from Spurgeon “Jake” Winters family member looking to find out more about what he did while in the Illinois Chapter of the BPP. Carol Downs’ family member called and commented on the website. The BPP clinic in Seattle is named after this wonderful Panther and has been open since 1969. It is still open everyday, having been adopted by the county.

A lot of things happened in 2011. Big victory for the SF8, charges dropped, All Power to the People. Emory Douglas traveled extensively and his art continues to influence people all over the world. Emory Douglas was the Minister of Culture then, but now he is the International Ambassador

for the BPP. This year alone, he has traveled to six different countries doing exhibits. Emory's art is still in great demand around the world.

Elbert" Big Man" Howard was given a surprise dinner for his community service in Sonoma, especially his work with PATCH – the Police Accountability Clinic and Helpline. He also is a frequent speaker in the area and has a radio program. The LA Panthers are still holding their once a month Breakfast for Panthers. The NY Panthers' annual Film Festival is still growing every year. This year they had a larger crowd than last year, showing films on both floors of the theater. The new National Alumni Association of the Black Panther Party organized a very good event for the 45th yr celebration in Philly.

Other good things happened in 2011. If you are at Laney College, go to the Student Center. On the fourth floor, they have a beautiful mural in the Student conference room. On the mural is Ericka Huggins and Chairman Bobby Seale, check it out. I was able to find a number of lost photos and was able to share them by putting some of them on the website, including photos of Bunchy Carter and George Jackson. I found photos of the 1970 People's Revolutionary Constitutional Convention in Washington DC. I also found photos of the 1969 May Day Rally for Huey Newton in San Francisco. This year alone we have uncovered about 50 photos from proof sheets and donations. Last week I attended a workshop and found out that a brother named Ken Green took some of the first photos of the BPP, including a famous photo of Huey with his beret on from 1967.

I want to mention the special issue of the Black Panther Newspaper celebrating the 45th yr. and our International Solidarity. The paper was sold internationally. This special issue has many photos from Panther formations from around the world with artwork by Emory and articles by Big Man. I would like to thank William C. and Nikki for all the great work on the newspaper.

One of the many things I look forward to every year is seeing Sister Charlotte O'Neal from Tanzania, during her annual tour of the U.S and her stop in Sacramento for R&R. This year Gail spearheaded a fundraiser and Birthday celebration. Her Samba dance group performed and the Legendary Caribbean All Stars played. Over \$4000 dollars was raised to help purchase a bus for the Leaders of Tomorrow Children's Home in Tanzania.

This year we lost a number of good comrades including Brother Geronimo, Michael Tabor, Donald Cox and Sha Sha Brown to name a few.

On the other hand the Polynesian Panthers in New Zealand and the Winston Salem chapter in North Carolina had their 40 yr celebrations. Black Power Mix Tapes came out.

It's been 40 years since charges were dropped against the NY 21. Comrade Eddie Conway published two books "Marshall Law" and "The Greatest Threat." Panther Cub Meres-Sia Gabnel published her book, "Twirl in the Smoke". Panther Cub Marcus Schell of Philly has his FaceBook popping with a lot of BPP history and connections with other Panther Cubs. I also am a member of FaceBook and have a number of images and photos on my site (Bill Jennings).

Back in April, Gail and I flew to New Orleans to be part of events planned for the Angola 3. While in New Orleans I had a chance to attend The Black Indians' "Super Sunday," a gathering of hundreds of Black Indians in full traditional dress. Gail had a chance to visit Albert Woodfox in his new location in upstate Louisiana and Herman Wallace in Hunt, near Baton Rouge. We hear from Herman and Albert of Angola 3 often and they send their Revolutionary Love.

It's about Time sponsored Richard Aoki Day at the W. Oakland Library in January. We also sponsored a number of photo exhibits this year all over the Bay area. We have sent exhibits overseas to London, Germany and Paris this year

We also contributed information and images to a number of books just now coming to the newsstands. "On the Ground" by Sean Stewart has images and art by the BPP and Emory Douglas; and interviews with Emory, Skip Shockley and myself. The book is about Underground newspapers and how some of them came about. "Body and Soul" by Alondra Nelson is about the BPP fight against Medical Discrimination, the development of community clinics and the Sickle Cell Anemia awareness campaign and has images we provided. "Imprisoned in Luminous Glare" by Leigh Raeford is about Photography and the African American Freedom Struggle and has images from our website. I should also mention that Jo Nina Abrons has a book coming out next month. Aaron Dixon's book is due out in February.

As you know, this was the the 45th yr since the founding of the BPP. A lot of energy and time was put into making the 45th yr celebration an

educational event in October. It's About Time also was a major sponsor of the Geronimo Memorial at Eastside Arts Alliance and Bobby Hutton Park in July. We came back with sponsoring the well attended George Jackson Day at Eastside's Arts celebrating George's life, 40 years after he was killed in August 1971.

I would like to thank everyone who has helped us to keep the website going with donations and material for our archives. I would like to thank Christine Saed and Veronica Lewis of the Oakland Public Library for making sure the BPP legacy is apart of the Oakland Library system, hats off to you. Both are winners of the Cindy Smallwood Community Service award this year.

The Cindy Smallwood Community Ward is awarded to people chosen by It's About Time as someone working to keep the spirit and legacy of the BPP alive. This was the first year this award was give and Cindy's older sister flew in from Las Vegas and we gave one to her. Cindy's parents were in the medical field. When she died, Cindy's parents started a foundation in her name that aided Afro American students going into the medical field. Many are doctors today and owe Mr. and Mrs. Smallwood thanks. I would like to thank ELMIKE (Mike Rodriguez) for all the great graphic work he did over the year, creating new images for us.